

8.35 ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY TRAINING

Orientation and Mobility Services

Orientation and Mobility (O&M) is the teaching of concepts, skills and techniques necessary for a person who is blind to travel safely, efficiently and confidently through any environment and under all environmental conditions and situations.

Orientation and mobility services may include: basic orientation concepts of body awareness and geometric shapes; use of reference systems to increase safety, independence and confidence; a primary travel system using residual vision, sighted guide, long cane, prescribed low vision aids or a combination of the above. Where appropriate, the system may integrate the use of a guide dog and electronic vision enhancement systems; effective indoor travel techniques, including self-protective techniques, trailing and room or building familiarization; safe and effective negotiation of outdoor areas including street crossings at various traffic controlled intersections and the use of public transportation.

Determining the Scope of Orientation and Mobility Services

The scope of orientation and mobility services provided is determined based upon an evaluation of the individual's needs relative to their vocational goal. The counselor will be provided a written report of the evaluation findings including recommendations. The counselor will discuss the evaluation findings and recommendations with the consumer to determine what, if any, services are to be provided to meet the consumer's goal.

Who Provides and Orientation and Mobility Training

Orientation and mobility training is provided by professional orientation and mobility instructors who meet the qualifications established by CBVH. They may be provided through a private agency, by a CBVH orientation and mobility instructor, as appropriate or by a private vendor.

Priority of Service Provider

The following order of selection is to be used when choosing a service provider teacher:

1. private agency personnel, when available
2. CBVH orientation and mobility instructor
3. independent orientation and mobility instructor who is approved by CBVH as a private vendor. Private vendors are to be used when priorities 1 and 2 are not available.

Economic Need

The provision of orientation and mobility training is not contingent upon an individual's economic need status.

Comparable Benefits

Where available, adequate and timely, comparable benefits are to be accessed in the provision of orientation and mobility training.